

February 16, 2012

Laura Wiener
Senior Planner, Town of Arlington
730 Massachusetts Ave
Arlington, MA, 02476

Delivery by Adobe PDF via email to Lwiener@town.arlington.ma.us

Subject: Arlington Center Safe Travel Project

Dear Ms Wiener:

Livable Streets Alliance would like to thank the Town of Arlington for their efforts to improve connections for pedestrians and bicyclists at the intersection of the Minuteman trail, Massachusetts Avenue and Rt 60. This is a vital route for both recreational and transportational cyclists, pedestrians and roller bladers, and we welcome the idea of a better solution for all modes.

Of the options presented at the meeting of January 10th, Livable Streets would like to express our support for option #5, with the cycle track and no parking along Mass Ave. We feel that a buffered cycle track is the best option for the large number of traffic intolerant cyclists who travel along the minuteman. However we have the following concerns and comments:

- 1) In any cycle track solution, we would like to see priority sharrows on the other side of Mass Ave in order to help facilitate through traffic on Mass Ave.
- 2) We are concerned about the safety of the diagonal crossbike being coincident with the left turn phase, and wonder if it would be possible to add a dedicated phase for this? It might have the additional benefit of serving as a scramble phase for pedestrians. If that is not possible, we would like to see additional measures to safeguard the cross bike from incursion by left turning cars, such as contrast color paint, or other signage or tactile/ visible warnings.
- 3) At the bank parking lot exit, the potential for conflicts exist, and we hope that further study could provide additional safeguards.
- 4) Pedestrian signals should be automatic and concurrent during daylight hours. Additionally no right turn on red should be posted where traffic must yield to crossing pedestrians.

Because of our misgivings about the safety of the diagonal crossbike, we reached out to Hans Voeknecht, a bicycle facility expert at the Dutch Transport Knowledge

ResourceCenter for his advice on this tricky intersection.

<http://www.kpVV.nl/KpVV/KpVVHome/Meta-Navigation/English-Summary.html>

His innovative suggestion, which we believe might be useful to consider in the context of the strong support for the cycletracks from the public meeting would be a combination of options #3 and #5- a signalized crossing at Swan place, a cycle track on the north (westbound) side of Mass Ave, and a crossbike parallel to the flow of traffic on Mass Ave. This solution would facilitate pedestrian as well as bicycle traffic and would eliminate conflicts at the bank parking lot, as there are no driveways on the north side. It does raise the possibility of right turn conflicts, which we believe could be ameliorated with separate phasing and possibly a raised crossbike/ crosswalk.

In an ideal world, parking removal for this half block in both directions would allow bicycle lanes for through traffic on the other side of Mass Ave. Although we understand that this is a sensitive issue, there was a great suggestion at the public meeting of additional parking on RT 60 northbound along the park, as there is only one lane of traffic feeding into it from any direction. If this additional parking is feasible, it could compensate for parking removal along Mass Ave, that would enable safer connections for the most vulnerable users.

We appreciate the Town's commitment to improving this intersection for all modes of travel, and hope that our comments can be considered in the ongoing design. If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me, at 617.851.2964 and carice@livablestreets.info

Sincerely,



Carice Reddien
Livable Streets Alliance Advocacy Committee